

FELT MAKING GUIDELINES

IDEAS TO EXPLORE:

- Discover the basic properties of fibers which allow the felt to take place.
- Learn terms: fulling, felting, hardening, scales, batts, carding, fiber, wool, hair, etc., as related to felt making.
- Explore what happens when different fibers are used in the felting process.
- Explore the relation between fiber length and felting.
- Learn techniques for making flat pieces of felt of various sizes.
- Learn techniques for making multidimensional solid shapes.
- Experiment with basic fiber carding techniques.
- Develop skills to evaluate the relative merits of various fibers in relation to the designated use of the felt being made.
- Explore historical and traditional uses of felt
- Find out how felt is used in modern society
- Expand the felt making frontiers into large scale sculptures and fiber murals
- Explore how surface embellishments can enhance a felted garment or other project.
- Learn basic techniques for joining felt pieces together related to how the item will be used.

PROJECT SUGGESTIONS:

Some of the types of items which can be made out of felt include: balls, Christmas ornaments, cat toys, dolls, stuffed animals, pouches, containers, vessels, pot holders, hot pads, coasters, jewelry, vests, jackets, capes, coats, boots, slippers, boot liners, hats, mitten, blankets, horse blankets, rugs, hearth rug for a fire place, welcome mats, wall hangings, murals, sculptures, etc.

Projects for various age and skill levels are suggested in the following breakdown. Age divisions as well as skill divisions are included in the suggested projects. This is to allow for greater flexibility when starting out a new program so older 4-Hers can also find a way to be challenged by felt making. Some of the early skills are suggested for older beginners because they require more physical strength and a longer attention span.

BEGINNER:

Age 9-11

- Felt balls for games, or ornamentation
- Creating pictures on a flat piece of felt
- Pot holders and hot pads

Age 12-14

- Felt vessels of various shapes
- Designing flat felt pieces for mittens or other small garments or toys
Pouches

Age 15-19

- Making and designing a personal felt hat
- Flat felt for a vest or jacket
- Blankets or wall hangings

INTERMEDIATE:

Age 9-11

- Felt vessels of various shapes
- Designing flat felt pieces for mittens or other small garments or toys
- Pouches

Age 12-14

- Making and designing a personal felt hat
- Flat felt for a vest or jacket
- Blankets or wall hangings

Age 15-19

- Document why a particular fiber was chosen for the project
- Making an item which incorporates surface designs in the felt and embellishments on the felt
- Making one or more projects which show at least two different felting techniques

ADVANCED:

Age 12-14

- Document why a particular fiber was chosen for the project
- Make an item which incorporates surface designs in the felt and embellishments on the felt.
- Making one or more projects which shows at least two different felting techniques.

Age 15-19

- Research a felting technique through the ages and show examples of projects made using the researched technique.
- Start with fibers directly from the animal and go through all the steps necessary to create a finished felted item. Use photo documentation with descriptive captions to show all the steps. This should be included with the final project.
- Create a felted mural or sculpture using multiple types of fibers.
- Experiment with new ways of making felt and create photo documentation of the experiments as well as the finished project.
- Explore original uses for felt and create a display documenting multiple uses.
- Project must take at least 6 hours for completion and must be able to explain technique.

4-H FOLKPATTERNS

Attached is a sheet which provides information on what FOLKPATTERNS is and a breakdown of the project areas provided by Michigan State University Museum. The following are the five basic objectives of any Folkpatterns project:

1. To provide members with skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to successfully collect and interpret oral and visual history materials.
2. To provide members with the opportunities to develop communication skills.
3. To develop in members a deeper appreciation and understanding of the traditional aspects of their lives.
4. To develop in the community an increased awareness of and appreciating for local history and folklore.
5. To join 4-H youths and leaders with local humanities resources in developing and carrying out projects.

Suggested Grade Level: Primarily designed for students between the ages of 11-10 but some projects could be adapted for younger students.

Resources available:

Cooperative Extension:

MSU Museum Guidelines

Folkpatterns Guidelines (4-H-1222 but an old book)

Folkpatterns Display

Folkpatterns slides/tapes

Folkpatterns Project Materials: Foodways 4H 1329 and Family Folklore 4H 1330

Historic Charlton Park Village & Museum is a possible resource for joint projects dealing with late 19th Century activities such as sheep shearing & wool production; dairy processes including milking, butter making, cream separation; broom making, cider production, quilts, genealogy; historic textiles, early agricultural equipment and historical photographs. Possible utilization of Charlton Park educational programs for groups may be feasible.

When available: The Cooperative Extension materials are available all year.

Charlton Park would require a 4-6 month lead time with some of its services due to staffing/programming commitments.

NOTE: All Folkpattern project entries must have a registration card completed when project is turned in at the fair.

4-H FAIR GUIDELINES FOR FOLKPATTERNS PROJECTS

Folkpatterns is a project area in which members learn about the traditions and cultural heritage of themselves, their families, communities and others. The traditions and skills are learned by talking to people and learning directly from the, whenever possible. Folkpatterns means the traditions (patterns) of people (the folk). There is an emphasis on the living traditions of people, things we do

today, but can also include projects that look back historically at folk traditions of the past. Folkpatterns projects focus on the traditions of United States folk groups. Projects that focus on traditions of people living in other countries would be classified under "International."

Types of fair projects include: exhibits, notebooks, photography, Folkpatterns short interview cards, Folkpatterns Scrapbook Sheets, tape-recorded interviews with tapes and indexes, videotapes, posters and handmade objects. Exhibits of handmade items like folk crafts should include the object and an explanation of the tradition and how it was learned. Both individual exhibits and group exhibits are encouraged and could be considered separate sections with the same classes.

LISTS AND GUIDELINES OF FOLKPATTERNS CLASSES:

Animal Lore:

Traditions associated with animals, such as raising animals, grooming know-how, naming customs, saddlemaking, proverbs or saying, stories, songs and rhymes about animals.

Architecture and Historical Sites:

Structure, history and use of a folk building such as a barn, upright and wing house, roadside stand, pigeon loft, outhouse, smokehouse, playhouse, local hamburger restaurant, or barber shop. Surveys of the folk architecture of a town or neighborhood, history of an old house, visits to and documentation of historical sites.

Beliefs:

Traditional knowledge, ideas, or opinions, that may govern thoughts and action, such as folk remedies, good luck saying and charms, beliefs in Santa Claus and the tooth fairy, in weather signs, and in planting according to the phase of the moon.

Celebrations, Ceremonies, Festivals, and Holidays:

Traditions associated with any of these events, such as community food festival, holiday decorating customs, family birthday celebrations and wedding ceremonies and parties.

Cemetery Study:

Using a cemetery to learn about family and local history, customs such as naming children, and gravestone decorations and sayings (epitaphs).

Children's Lore:

Traditional games, rhymes, stories, saying, toys, jokes, nicknames and secret language of children.

Clothing and Ornament Traditions:

a) Folk: Traditional ways of dressing and decorating the body to identify oneself as part of a group, including hair grooming customs (like hair braiding), facial ornamentation (like face painting at football games) and occupational clothing.

b) Historical: Collecting historical clothing or making items from original patterns.

Customs:

Traditional practices passed on by word of mouth or by example, such as customs around births, birthdays, graduation, weddings, retirement and death and often associated with holidays and the life cycle. (Also see the Celebrations, Ceremonies, Festivals and Holiday)

Dance:

Patterned movements to music that are taught to one another or mimicked such as polka, waltzes, clogging, stepping, tap and square dancing.

Ethnic Traditions:

Folk traditions of an ethnic group (people sharing the same cultural heritage), such as crafts, arts, customs, celebrations, dance, song, etc.

Family Folklore and History:

Traditions of one's family such as stories, sayings, customs, beliefs, celebrations and keepsakes; the family's past including photographs, stories of a family's migration, how the family name was changed, historical sites for one's family such as homes, birthplaces, cemeteries. (Also see the "genealogy section).

Folk Arts and Crafts:

- a) Folk: Decorative and functional objects traditionally made today within a family or community, such as fences, mailbox stands, yard decorations, scarecrows, trout flies, ice fishing lines, quilts, rag rugs, pinatas, etc.
- b) Historical: Objects once made during another era but no longer traditional today, such as candle dipping, soapmaking, stenciling and tin punching.

Foodways:

Traditions of obtaining, preparing, cooking, eating, storing and sharing foods. Folk art using food, gardening techniques, food festivals, harvest celebrations, recipes, etc.

Games and Toys:

Handmade items, games, and recreational pastimes that are passed on by word of mouth or by example usually from child to child, such as singing games, tag, skipping rope, paper airplanes, and hopscotch. Rhymes, rules of play and customs associated with folk games and toys, how and when they are played, how the game is learned, etc.

Gardening Traditions (including Heritage Gardening):

Traditions passed on by word of mouth or by example in gardening, including types of plants customarily planted, traditional recipes using home grown produce, and styles of arranging a garden, propping plants, and scaring away predators. Heritage gardening is using heirloom or historical varieties of seeds to produce gardens from earlier historical periods. Traditional gardening is gardening according to your family's customs and traditions.

Genealogy:

Family tree (lineage chart), photo family tree, projects involving a search for one's ancestor's names and history.

Humor and Jokes:

Jokes, funny stores, funny sayings, bumper stickers, joke drawings, riddles, puns, etc., collections and descriptions of jokes about current events.

Hunting, Fishing, Trapping Lore:

Traditions of recreational and food gathering activities, such as decoy carving and use, tricks and secrets, fish lure making, fly tying, homemade traps, boat building, stories about past experiences (like fish stories), hunting camp traditions and making a duck blind.

Local History:

The stories and memories of a local community, including its local legends, stories about local places or landmark, legendary persons, or important local events. Use of historical photographs, maps, local library materials, etc.

Medicine and Remedies:

Practices and beliefs about curing and healing that are passed on informally by word of mouth or example, collections of folk medicine beliefs.

Music and Song:

Musical traditions that are based within a community or group, such as Native American powwow music and dance, instrument making, made up songs sung by children, camp songs, school cheers, cowboy songs, mining songs, spirituals, gospel music, old-time fiddle music, tamburitza, Mexican-American conjunto music, etc.

Narrative:

Stories, legends, tales, anecdotes, sayings and other spoken traditions, even including telephone answering machine messages.

Occupational Traditions:

Workplace knowledge learned informally by word of mouth or by example, such as the clothes to wear, how to decorate the workplace, customs, special saying, slang, nicknames, celebrations, ceremonies, initiation rites, awards, jokes and pranks.

Speech:

Traditional words, expressions or names used in a particular region or by a group.

Any other folk tradition project not listed above